

# Dvorak Dvelopments

Incorporating Quick Strokes

Dvorak Dvelopments #43 (Volume 13, Number 1) • Fall 1985

## Federal Agencies Have Started Conversion to Dvorak

by Randy Cassingham

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The United States Air Force has already started making the switch to the Dvorak keyboard. The switch will involve as many as 800,000 typists on all levels.

The Air Force leads a large group of Federal agencies that are currently implementing or discussing the Dvorak layout as an aid to increased productivity. The group includes the Department of Agriculture, the Internal Revenue Service, the General Services Administration, the Social Security agency, the Postal Service, Defense Logistics, the Capitol, the Department of the Interior, the Smithsonian Institution, the Department of Human Services, the Chronicle of Education and Economic Research, the United States Information Agency, the Joint Economics Committee of Congress, the House Information Services Committee, and the Security and Exchange Commission, who hosted a meeting of the group recently.

Other agencies who have asked for information from the Dvorak International Federation include the Army, the Veterans Administration, the Coast Guard, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Department of Transportation, the National Bureau of Standards, the Patent office, and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Organized by DIF President **Virginia Russell**, representatives of many of the agencies met together for the first time in Washington D.C. during August. They are meeting again in October when they will review some of the products available for converting computers and typewriters and review the typist training packages available that support the keyboard. (Any vendors that aren't in on this should contact DIF immediately.)

"I believe very strongly that Washington is where the Dvorak movement will take off," said Russell. "This is where it's going to happen; why wouldn't it — considering the economics in government right now." Russell said the Federal Dvorak group was formed so that the agencies could support each other. Representatives from each agency interested in the Dvorak can get together to share experiences, problems and solutions regarding the conversion process.

With the increasing demand of the Federal Office of Management and Budget that agencies tighten their belts and save money, the Dvorak keyboard fits in well. According to a study by the Department of Navy in 1944, conversion to the Dvorak layout could be paid for by the increase in productivity in as little as 10.3 working days.

Considering the current budget deficit, the new ease in switching to the Dvorak, the increased productivity and lessened operator fatigue it brings, and the increasing number of companies that support the keyboard, it is time that the switch be made. With the incredible number of typists employed by the government, some experts think the conversion to Dvorak could save the government several million dollars per year.

This Federal action will have an enormous impact on the business and education world. The government is taking the lead, and others — especially business schools — will have to quickly alter their training programs to provide Dvorak typists to fill the demand this action will cause.

## Dvorak Use is Increasing

by Virginia Russell

President, Dvorak International Federation

Since I last wrote in a Dvorak-related publication, I have seen the Dvorak Keyboard go from close-to-unknown to becoming the household word of the year.

Today there are hundreds of thousands of new keyboard users. Those people suddenly have a computer on their desk and no ability to input through the keyboard. Because it is possible to achieve 40 WPM in 18 hours on the Dvorak — as opposed to 56 hours for 40 WPM on Qwerty — we are finding that the usage of the Dvorak is beginning to magnify rapidly.

Government agencies, Fortune 500 companies, secretarial schools, high schools and colleges are beginning to teach Dvorak typing. Why this new interest in the Dvorak Keyboard?

Until recently, it was very difficult to convert a typewriter. Today there is a simple computer chip change, a different plug-in computer keyboard, software conversion for instant conversion to Dvorak, or a switch to allow a computer or typewriter to be Dvorak or Qwerty. These are the reasons that it is easy today to implement the Dvorak Keyboard in any situation.

Why is the Dvorak Keyboard now being studied so intently? Productivity increase is the word in the office place. President Reagan has talked about improved productivity as the key to helping the economy. In the office we arrange our desks and lighting to be more comfortable, the color of the walls is chosen to produce a peaceful work environment — we improve the human factor, which in turn increases productivity. For one hundred years we used a keyboard designed to slow us down. Today, in the middle of the Information Age, we have come to our senses. Productivity and the Dvorak Keyboard are synonymous.

## DIF Proposes Federal Tax Credit

The Dvorak International Federation has proposed to the U.S. Congress a tax credit for businesses that convert to the Dvorak keyboard. Converting to the new keyboard would save businesses and government a substantial sum of money.

The credit would fit into President Reagan's philosophy of stimulating the economy to reduce the current budget deficit. DIF believes that businesses would quickly convert from the Qwerty layout if given this opportunity, and the credit would not have to be in effect long.

"The credit would be of limited life, since the impetus for conversion would quickly eradicate use of the Qwerty arrangement," said DIF president **Virginia Russell**.

DIF sent out a letter and information packet on the keyboard to each member of Congress. Some congressmen have shown considerable interest by getting back to DIF for more information.

The Federal government itself has started conversion to Dvorak, an action that is likely to stimulate much interest in the keyboard in the private sector.

## Dvorak-Related Products Multiply

In the last issue of *Dvorak Developments*, we presented a quick overview of some of the products available on the market which specifically support the Dvorak keyboard. That list grows constantly, so we thought we would bring it completely up to date. Below is information about all of the Dvorak-related products from all the companies which have sent us information so far. The list is in alphabetical order.

**Age of Reason**, 318 East 6th St #123, New York NY 10003, (212) 473-2309, offers PC/DVORAK, a program that converts the IBM PC to Dvorak. (see their ad in this issue)

**Apple Computer** built the Dvorak keyboard into their IIc model, making it the first personal computer that had the Dvorak instantly available — a button by the keyboard instantly converts it. Other Apple products are easily convertible with products listed in this section.

**Belmont Adams**, 4 Park Avenue, Scarborough ME 04074, has a stock of various Dvorak items, including Smith Corona typewriters, some hard-to-find Dvorak typing manuals, and a few mint copies of Dvorak's major 1936 typewriting book, *Typewriting Behavior*.

**Camwil**, 875 Waimanu St, Honolulu HI 96813, (800) 367-5765 makes printing elements that, when installed on a typewriter, effectively rearrange the type to Dvorak. They have type balls for IBM Selectrics and print wheels that fit Diablo, Canon, Vydec and other machines that use the Diablo standard wheel. Prices are: \$65 for print wheels, \$85 for Selectric elements.

**The Covington Group**, 310 Riverside Drive, New York NY 10025, makes KEYER, a Dvorak conversion program for the TRS-80 Models 100 and 200, and the NEC, lap computers — favorite machines of reporters and other on-the-go people. It sells for \$14.95. (KEYER will be reviewed in a future issue)

**Digital Equipment Corp.**, who makes many computers (including the popular PDP-11 series) and computer terminals, has recently announced that Dvorak keyboards will be optional on all of their terminals and computers.

**The Dvorak International Federation** has many products and services available. See the story on them in this issue for details. (also see DIF's ad in this issue)

**Faultline Micro**, PO Box 3147, Fullerton CA 92634, (714) 526-5055 makes a module for the Apple IIe that allows instant switching between Qwerty and Dvorak. The module can be installed by the user, and the process looks very easy. It comes with a keyboard overlay showing the layout of the keys, and is compatible with all software. \$39.95.

**Freelance Communications** is the publishing company that publishes *Dvorak Developments*. They are also the publisher of a new book on the keyboard, written by newsletter editor Randy Cassingham. The book — which will be the only in-print book about the keyboard — is coming out in January. (see the book's ad in this issue)

## About This Issue

The *Quick Strokes* newsletter, which has been publishing since 1973, has a new publisher and has been renamed to *Dvorak Developments*. The new publisher is making changes that will benefit the readers. The subscription rates have gone down from \$14 to \$12 for a one year subscription to the only newsletter published that covers the current news about the Dvorak Keyboard. See the subscription information in the box below — we hope you will subscribe.

This issue of *Dvorak Developments* — the biggest ever in pages and circulation — is going to everyone on our mailing list, including past subscribers and others who have requested information about the Dvorak in the past. It is expensive for us to send out so many free copies, but we want to call to your attention how much things have changed both at this newsletter and in the business place, where the Dvorak is seeing utilization as it never has before.

The new publisher's goal is to make this publication *useful* to you. You will get information about the products available, including reviews; information about who is using the keyboard, including the results of their experiments, the problems they had and the solutions they found — applications from the individual user to military applications with 800,000 typists.

Never before has there been so many companies with products that support the keyboard. Most of them are listed in the products section of this special issue, some of those have advertising in these pages. Support these pioneering companies, and please tell them you saw them in *Dvorak Developments* when you order products or request information.

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## Dvorak Developments

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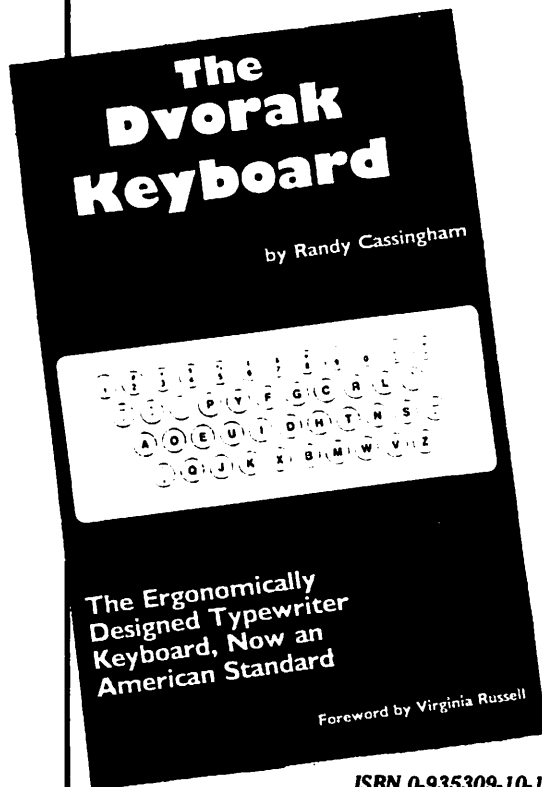
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Editorial offices: P.O. Box 717, Arcata CA 95521. Communications are also available via the CompuServe Information Service. Address electronic mail to account 72246,172.

## Finally... A *Book* about the Dvorak!

If you have tried to find information about the Dvorak Keyboard, you know how hard it is to find something that is complete, accurate, and up-to-date. Now your search is over with the publication of *The Dvorak Keyboard* by Randy Cassingham, the editor of *Dvorak Developments*.



### Includes:

- The logical design and evolution of the Dvorak
- How Qwerty became entrenched
- Analysis of why it took more than 100 years for the Simplified Keyboard to gain wide acceptance
- Information about how to make the change to the Dvorak, whether for an individual or a large corporation
- Hard-to-find information about the special keyboards Dr. Dvorak designed for one-handed typing
- a foreword by Virginia Russell, president of the Dvorak International Federation

And a detailed appendix listing the many products available that support the keyboard.

ISBN 0-935309-10-1

When published in January, *The Dvorak Keyboard* will sell for \$12.95 plus shipping. But if you order now you can reserve your copy for only \$10.95 and we'll pay the shipping charges. Order as many copies as you wish, but *your order must be received by December 31, 1985 to get this price.*

Your book(s) will be shipped as soon as possible after this edition comes off the press no later than January 15, 1985.

Send check or money order (sorry, no COD's or bank cards for this special) to:

Freelance Communications  
Post Office Box 717  
Arcata CA 95521

Special Section

Continued from page 2

**Hooleon Company**, Page Springs Road — PO Box 201, Cornville AZ 86325, (602) 634-7517, makes Dvorak keyboard overlays for Apple, DEC, IBM, and Morrow computers. They slip over the keys and have both Dvorak and Qwerty legends, so switching back and forth between the two layouts can be accomplished more easily. (see Hooleon's ad in this issue)

**KeyTronic**, PO Box 14687, Spokane WA 99214, (800) 262-6006, offers several different models of replacement keyboards with Dvorak layouts for computers. The KB5150 fits the IBM PC or XT for \$209. The KB5151 is a deluxe version of the above, with a different layout of the cursor and number pad keys, for \$255. For the IBM PCjr computer, the KB5150jr is \$219, the KB5151jr is \$255. Keytronics has recently announced a model that will fit the IBM PC-AT. Call for details.

**Maxi-Switch**, 9697 NW East River Road, Coon Rapids MN 55433, (612) 755-7660, has replacement Dvorak keyboards for IBM and compatible personal computers. A single keyboard works on all three models — the PC, the XT, and the AT — by means of an internal switch. The keyboard is said to have an excellent typing feel. List price is only \$125. (see Maxi's ad in this issue)

**Mindscape**, 3444 Dundee Road, Northbrook IL 60062, (312) 480-7669, offers Keyboard Cadet, a typing tutorial program that features a selection between Dvorak and Qwerty training in the same package. The program is available for the Apple II series, the IBM PC, and Commodore computers. Mindscape is a subsidiary of SFN, a leading educational publishing company. Keyboard Cadet costs \$39.95. (Keyboard Cadet will be reviewed in a later issue)

**Morton Communication Systems International**, PO Box 60241, Chicago IL 60660, (312) 973-3428, offers audio/visual training packages designed for institutional use for teaching typing and retraining to Dvorak. Training may be on a group or individual level. Prices vary according to the package ordered. (see the Morton ad in this issue)

**Prelco**, 14202 Galy St, Tustin CA 92680, (714) 544-3041, has a program for the Commodore-64 that allows you to learn the Dvorak keyboard. It comes with the Short Course for Dvorak typing written by August Dvorak and a set of keycap overlays with both Dvorak and Qwerty legends. It costs \$36.95. (see Prelco's ad in this issue)

**QED Information Sciences'** Typing Made Easy has been called "one of the best" tutorials available for Dvorak retraining. The program runs on all the IBM machines and compatibles, the Apple II series, and the Macintosh. It sells for \$59.95. QED can be reached at: PO Box 151, Wellesley MA 02181, (800) 343-4848.

**Rosesoft**, 4710 University NE #601, Seattle WA 98105, (206) 524-2350, is the publisher of the Prokey keyboard software package. The program is capable of assigning any character, or sequence of characters, to any key on an IBM or compatible computer. It retails for \$129.95 and comes with a definition file for instant Dvorak selection. Definition files for the special one-hand Dvorak layouts are available on request.

**Seasoned Systems**, Box 3720, Chapel Hill NC 27514, (800) 334-5531, offers SureStroke. The computer program runs on IBMs and compatibles and converts the keyboard to Dvorak. It comes with a tutorial program to help you convert to the new keyboard and stick-on letters for the keys. The cost is \$95. They

Continued on page 6

## ORIGINAL dvorak TYPING MANUAL

Smith Corona Manual for Dvorak Typing

Published by the Dvorak International Federation  
Written by August Dvorak and Smith Corona Corporation

**12 LESSONS**  
**\$10.95 + \$2.00 POSTAGE**

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Mail form to: Dvorak International Federation, Box 128, Brandon, VT 05733

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## California Drags its Feet

In the last issue of *Dvorak Developments*, there was a report that a library supervisor from the California State University had submitted a formal proposal for conversion to the Dvorak keyboard. He recently got his answer from the state merit board.

The supervisor, **Charles Gordon** of Humboldt State University, was notified that similar suggestions had been under review since at least 1979. Each time, the state decided against conversion based on several factors.

Those factors include limited availability of Dvorak-equipped typewriters, the "Hawthorne Effect", limited supply of Dvorak-trained typists, and a reference to studies that "showed no work output difference in the two keyboards".

If any state — let alone one as large as California — requests Dvorak typewriters from a major manufacturer, the manufacturer will provide them. IBM, for instance, has been willing for years to provide Dvorak keyboards on special order.

The Hawthorne Effect is, according to the state document, the phenomenon where "any change in an employee's surroundings or situation will account for a positive, though temporary, increase in productivity". The U.S. Navy, in their famous study in 1944, studied whether this effect was present in Dvorak applications; it wasn't. In fact, when they checked the typists' productivity after several months, they found it had gone up significantly — up from the average 74% gain at the end of the study.

As for the supply of typists, someone must take the initiative; and that is one of the roles of government. If employers and government ask for Dvorak trained typists, they will get them from the schools.

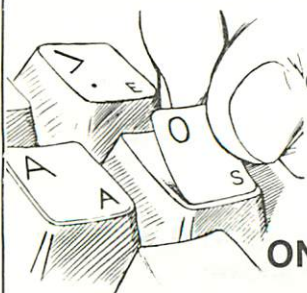
The increase in productivity has been proven by objective, scientific studies starting with the Navy report. It has been proven

*Continued on page 7*

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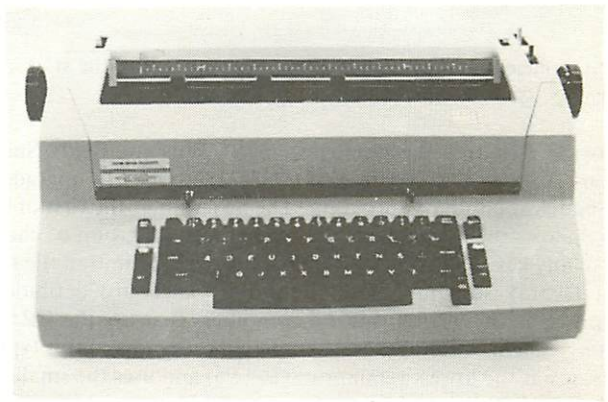
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ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Special Section

Continued from Page 5

also sell replacement key caps if you prefer not to use the stick-on letters; \$35. (*see the SureStroke ad in this issue*)

**Software Research Technologies**, 3757 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 211, Los Angeles CA 90010, (213) 737-7252, recently upgraded their SmartKey computer program. The program — the first of its kind — allows the assignment of any character or group of characters to any key, and comes with a prearranged definition file for instant Dvorak selection. This is the only keyboard definition program we know of that runs on computers that use the CP/M operating system. Of the several competing programs of this type, SmartKey has the lowest retail price (\$49.95) and uses the smallest amount of the computer's memory. (*see SRT's ad in this issue*)

**The Southern California Research Group**, PO Box 593, Moorpark CA 93021, (805) 529-2082, offers The Magic Keyboard, a hardware enhancement for the Apple II and II+. It offers a choice among the Qwerty, Dvorak, one-hand Dvorak, Montgomery, and alphabetic keyboards. It comes with stick-on key cap letters and is compatible with all software. Cost is \$49.95.

**The Switch to Dvorak Company**, PO Box 2919, Satellite Beach FL 32937, (305) 773-4381, offers an easy to install Apple IIe Dvorak conversion kit for \$25. Also available are Dvorak overlay keycaps (\$25), and the Smith Corona short course typing manual (\$10).

**Trask Office Systems**, 73 Center St, Rutland VT 05701, (802) 773-3376, offers Dvorak conversion service on IBM Selectric typewriters, and has recently announced an instruction book for

typewriter service companies detailing the conversion procedure. Kits with all the needed parts to make conversions are also available. Trask probably has more experience in converting typewriters to Dvorak than anyone else. (*see the Trask ad in this issue*)

**Wico**, 6400 Gross Point Road, Niles IL 60648, (312) 647-7500, makes a replacement keyboard for the IBM PC, the PC-XT, and Apple II line. The SmartBoard has both the Qwerty and Dvorak layouts built in, or you can program a custom layout. A built in 'track ball' does away with desk-space-consuming 'mice' and a type-ahead buffer allows you to keep typing even if the computer is temporarily busy. Suggested retail is \$399. An adaptor for the Apple II is extra.

We also understand that Dvorak layouts are available on the following machines:

- The Vydec 1800 word processor
- Telex machines, with a special conversion board from Microswitch
- CPT word processors
- Digital Equipment's DECMATE word processor
- IBM Displaywriter
- Hewlett Packard's 2626W word processor
- Varityper typesetting systems
- Wang OIS and VS word processors

If you can't find a product in this list that meets your needs, contact the Dvorak International Federation for information to fit your specific application. If you know of a company that has a Dvorak-related product that isn't listed in this section, *please* send information about it to **Dvorak Developments**.

## SURESTROKE/DVORAK

Don't miss the benefits of Dvorak another day. SureStroke/Dvorak gives you a sophisticated keystrokes translator for PC-DOS applications, superb Dvorak typing Coach, self-motivation audio cassette, transfer letters, keytop puller, and manual. \$95 plus \$4 shipping/handling; VISA/MC/AMEX/Check. You can stroke the Dvorak today!

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or in NC (919) 732-9391

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## DIF Deluged with Inquiries

The Dvorak International Federation is a non-profit organization whose goal is to help businesses and government agencies convert to the Dvorak keyboard. To that end, they offer information on products that can be used to convert specific equipment, information on methods to retrain keyboard operators, consulting services, and more.

DIF has been contacted by companies and governments all over the world, each requesting information about the keyboard or help with converting. Among those requesting information have been churches, doctors, lawyers, more than 100 of the Fortune 500 companies, universities, and foreign governments.

In addition to the services DIF provides, they also have various products available to help with the conversion process. Most notably is the Short Course for the Dvorak Keyboard. This manual was written by the late **August Dvorak** for Smith Corona and is now distributed by DIF. It costs \$10.95 plus \$2 postage. They also have a keyboard utility to convert Apple Macintosh computers to Dvorak. Written by Apple, it is available from DIF for \$10 including postage. Software for other computers is widely available at many computer stores.

**Dvorak Developments** and DIF are separate organizations with separate management. DIF President **Virginia Russell** and the Federation figure highly in the reporting that **Dvorak Developments** does because of Russell's involvement in most of the large changeover projects.

Russell is probably the one single person who knows the most about the keyboard, conversion, and current applications. DIF offers memberships for \$20 per year that allows telephone support including information on availability of computers with the Dvorak arrangement, software and hardware conversion, training

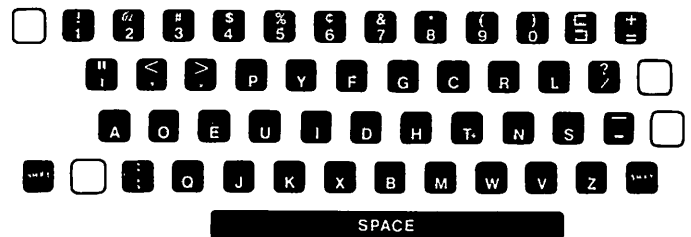
suggestions for both organizations and individuals, information on who is currently using the keyboard, and where to find written materials on the Dvorak — a lot for \$20. Members will also be getting a subscription to **Dvorak Developments** as part of their membership.

**Dvorak Developments** is deeply indebted to Mrs. Russell for her generosity in time and material that makes this newsletter what it is. Russell and DIF can be reached at PO Box 128, Brandon VT 05733, (602) 247-6020.

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by current applications in business, and it has been proven by the Federal government's conversion recently. **Dvorak Developments** knows of no objective, scientific studies that showed no productivity increase.

The state governments need to find out about the Dvorak and follow the Federal government's lead on the conversion process.



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### COLOR KEYS

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**SmartKey** normally sells for \$49.95, but if you call the toll-free number and mention the **Dvorak Developments** newsletter, take 10% off — \$44.95 includes shipping. Visa and Mastercard accepted. To order your copy, call (800) 824-5537 (in Calif., (213) 384-5430) or send a check or money order to:

Software Research Technologies, Inc.  
3757 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 211  
Los Angeles, CA 90010

## Bibliographic Notes

Even with all the reading we do, we can't possibly see all of the articles in print that cover the fight to make the Dvorak keyboard the primary layout. But we are currently in the midst of another wave of media attention, so the articles are numerous. If you see an article about the Dvorak in your reading, we would appreciate it if you would send us a copy.

Some of the bibliographic references we list are less recent than others; we tell you about them when we learn about them. Some of articles that are widely available include

- *Personal Computing*, January 1985. Short article on **Barbara Blackburn** (world's fastest Dvorak typist).
- *Today's Office*, January 1985. Basic information about the Dvorak, with the conclusion that "the Qwerty keyboard may eventually disappear from the office."
- *Los Angeles Times*, January 10, 1985. Article on the keyboard gaining acceptance and a short profile of Barbara Blackburn.
- *Business Education Forum*, February 1985. Basic article on the keyboard with the conclusion that educators should consider switching to the Dvorak in their typing classes.
- *Management Technology*, February 1985. Basic informational article.
- *Industry Week*, March 18, 1985. Article on the new market segment for Dvorak keyboard-related products.
- *Stanford Observer*, April 1985. Basic article on the Dvorak, with an analysis of why the obviously inferior Qwerty has hung on for so many years.
- *The Seattle Times*, May 20, 1985. Basic article on the keyboard with an interview and large photo of Dr. Dvorak's widow **Hermione Dvorak**, who still lives in Seattle. The writer let out a secret: Dr. Dvorak never learned how to type.
- *The Kiplinger Washington Letter*, July 26, 1985. Mention that the Dvorak is being tested by business and government, and

predicts it may become the standard keyboard.

- *Nation's Business*, August 1985. Excellent article on the Dvorak, with interviews with people who actually use the keyboard — including some **Dvorak Developments** subscribers.
- *Personal Computing*, August 1985. General article on keyboarding, with a comparison between Qwerty and Dvorak.
- This summer, Dvorak International Federation President **Virginia Russell** was interviewed by the *Voice of America* about the history and current implementation of the keyboard. It ran overseas to many countries.
- *Infoworld*, September 8, 1985. Short article on how the revolution of personal computers on executive's desks and the boom in products making keyboard conversion easier has increased the acceptance of the Dvorak in businesses.

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*Classified*

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